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U.S. Representative Brad Miller Awards the Soldier's Medal for Valor to Retired Raleigh Doctor

71-year old to receive the highest military honor for non-combat heroism in Vietnam 43 years ago

Raleigh, N.C. – U.S. Representative Brad Miller takes pleasure in presenting the Soldier's Medal to **Dr. Lyle Parker** of Raleigh for courage and valor during the rescue of four crewmen from a burning helicopter at Camp Rainer, Dau Tieng, Republic of Vietnam in 1968. The long overdue honor will be awarded to Dr. Parker at a ceremony this Saturday, October 15th at the North Carolina Museum of History.

On January 31, 1968, Captain Parker, a member of the Army's 154th Medical Detachment,

risked his life to rescue four crewmen from the wreckage of a helicopter while the base camp was under mortar, rocket and small arms attack. He continued to search the debris of the crash for survivors when the burning helicopter's engine exploded, engulfing the aircraft in a ball of fire. Captain Parker then provided first aid for the four survivors.

"We might never have known Dr. Parker's story if not for the admiration of Lt. Colonel Jack Johnson, an assault helicopter Commander, who witnessed and never forgot the actions of the young doctor," **Rep. Miller** said.

Johnson wrote in a letter to the Congressman that he was stunned to learn at a reunion several years later that Parker's actions had never been recognized. He wrote that the only reason the recommendation for the medal was submitted so late is because the Tet Offensive of 1968 put an end to any effort to develop and forward paperwork of any kind.

"Captain Parker was not just a doctor; he was a trusted and extremely valuable subordinate commander who had my complete confidence," Lt. Col. Johnson wrote in the letter.

"If we were in the field in a fight somewhere and we were almost on a daily basis in 1967-1968, 'Doc' would appear in our staging area where all our wounded would be gathered, and 'Doc' would be there in action providing life saving care," Johnson continued.

Dr. Parker joins some notable recipients of the Soldier's Medal including General Colin Powell who was awarded the decoration during his second tour in Vietnam when he was injured during the rescue of crewmembers from the burning wreckage of a helicopter. In 2001, following the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, the Army issued a number of these awards to personnel who risked their own lives to assist others in the wake of the attack.

*****Reporter note***** Dr. Parker is retired, lives in Raleigh with his wife and loves to restore vintage cars.

WHAT: Presentation of the Soldier's Medal to Dr. Lyle Parker

WHEN: Saturday, October 15th, 2 P.M. to 3 P.M.

WHERE: North Carolina Museum of History, Call to Arms Room in front of the Vietnam War display, 5 East Edenton St., Raleigh

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